



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

Commander's Corner

AUGUST 2009



"Exercise Talisman Saber was a huge success thanks to the hard work and dedication of each and every Marine and Sailor assigned to the 31st MEU. There really is no other training area in the world like the Shoalwater Bay Training Area that allows a MEU-sized Marine Air Ground Task Force to conduct a full scale amphibious assault and subsequent operations ashore like we did during Exercise Talisman Saber. This was a unique experience that benefitted the individual Marine and Sailor as well as the Marine Corps as an institution in the way that it increased our proficiency in these types of operations. It also was extremely rewarding to have had the opportunity to work with our Australian Defense Force counterparts. They are a very professional force that we can definitely count on when the going gets tough.

The USS Essex and USS Denver are enroute to Okinawa and are scheduled to arrive on the 13th of August at White Beach. The USS Tortuga, with most of CLB-31 and the BLT's India Company embarked, arrived in Okinawa on the 1st of August and those Marines have returned to garrison at Camp Hansen. With our arrival in Okinawa, we will conclude the MEU's spring/summer patrol and commence a major turnover of personnel and equipment in preparation for our fall patrol. Battalion Landing Team 3/5 will be replaced by Battalion Landing Team 2/5 from Camp Pendleton as the MEU's Ground Combat Element. HMM-265,

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Deployment Information.....	2
Chaplain's Corner.....	3
Cultural Events	4
On-Island Tours.....	5
Monthly Special's	6
Oki Napa.....	7
Extra's.....	8
Classes.....	9
On-Line Resource Links	10

out of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, will replace HMM-262 as the Aviation Combat Element. CLB-31, our Logistics Combat Element, will also see about 50% of its personnel rotate back to the 3d Marine Logistics Group in Okinawa and be replaced by new faces. All of this turnover will take place during the month of August and we will begin our next intensive training cycle on the first of September. Barring any unforeseen contingencies, our fall shipboard underway period will commence the last week in September and continue until just before Thanksgiving. We will be conducting exercises with the Philippine Marine Corps, the Korean Marine Corps and the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force.

The Command Element will observe two leave periods during the turnover window. The first leave period will be from 19-30 August and the second leave period will be from 2-13 September. In order to meet our required readiness posture, no more than 50% of the Command Element may be on leave at any one time.

I'd like to thank everyone in our greater MEU family for their support and encouragement during our time away from home over the last seven months. I sincerely appreciate it and I wish you all the best for the upcoming reunions with your Marine or Sailor."

Semper Fidelis,

Col Paul L. Damren, USMC

IMPORTANT DATES

MEU RETURNS HOME8/13



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

Deployment Information

DEPLOYMENT CONTACT NUMBERS

Family Readiness Officer	080-1794-9631
Family Readiness Hotline	623-9110

INTERNATIONAL DIALING

Family Readiness Officer	011-81-80-1794-9631
Family Readiness Hotline	011-81-611-723-9110
Deployment E-mail address:	fro@essex.usmc.mil

HANDY PHONE NUMBERS

Counseling and Advocacy Program	645-2915-2916
Substance Abuse Counseling Center (SACC)	645-3009
New Parent Support Program	645-0396
Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS)	645-6077
Personal Financial Specialist	622-7416
Ambulance On-base	911
Off-Base	911-1911
From Cell Phones	098-911-1911
Poison Control	643-7700
Emergency Room	643-7338
Dental Emergencies Working hours	643-7585
After hours	643-7338
Camp Foster Red Cross	645-3800



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

Chaplain's Corner

A Journey of Blessing by Chaplain Ray Bailey

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:28 that "...we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (NIV).

It is important to understand that Paul is not saying that everything that happens is a good thing. However, he reminds us that even in the midst of unfortunate events, good things can come out of it.

A person's response to all of life's events, the good, the bad and the ugly must remain focused on God. This must occur through the thick and thin, the ebb and flow of life in order for us to properly get through it. Since the tragic events of 9/11 a "god-focus" can be seen on countless marquees, which read, "God Bless America." The fact that God has blessed us no matter what tragedy befalls us is a great perspective and response in life.

Take a short journey of the blessings from God with me. All mankind was blessed began when God created each and every one of us in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27). Pascal stated, "all people have been created with a god-shaped vacuum which can only be filled with a personal relationship with God." We've all been blessed, as everyone possesses the capacity to have and enjoy a personal relationship with our Creator.

The next blessing may be seen as a double-edged sword. God created us with a free will, which gives us the ability to make choices. God did not create us, nor did He desire to create a bunch of robots. God's desire for us to worship Him by choice not as a result of robot-type humans spurting out robotics' "I love you's" to our Creator. However, the flip side of the freewill coin came in the Garden of Eden. It occurred when Adam and

Eve as mankind's representatives chose disobedience to the plan of God rather than obedience to His plan. In other words, Eve fell through "deception" and Adam through "affection."

The best blessing came in God's incredible but costly plan of redemption for mankind. God did not and will never leave us "out on a limb" as prescribed by author and actress Shirley McClain. God's most awesome blessing to America and all of mankind comes to us as result of His love for us and the sacrifice He made for us to accomplish his plan of redemption which is available to all of mankind. This blessing is not automatic but requires each person individually to place his/her faith and trust in God. The key is putting our trust in God alone not horses or chariots (Psalm 20:7) or any other thing we think might save other than God's plan of redemption. As we put our trust in God for salvation we become part of the family of God. The blessing of being part of the family of God includes a reservation in our Father's house. In the Gospel of John 1:2 we are told that God's house has many rooms and at the current time is being prepared for us.

Therefore, it is true, "God Has Blessed America!" I hope our little journey of blessing can be your source of strength, comfort, joy and hope through all of life's situations.

Blessings,

Chaplain Ray Bailey



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

CULTURAL EVENTS

For information on Cultural Events Contact: Michiko Urasaki 645- 3127

Hagoromo Festival

(Folk Dance, Fireworks, Food)

Kahn Beach Park, Iowan City

08 & 09 August, 1500-2100

Free

The Ventures Concert

Okinawa Convention Center

11 August, 1830

Cost: ¥4500/¥5000/¥5500

Eisa Dance Performance

Koza Music Town, outside Kadena
Gate 2

01, 15, 29, 30 August, 2030

Free

All Okinawa Youth Eisa Festival

(Eisa dancers, fireworks, food)

Chatan Town Sports Field

23 & 24 August, 1600-2100

Cost: ¥500/¥1000/¥3000



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

On-Island Tours

[CLICK HERE](#) for Kadena ITT

[CLICK HERE](#) for Tours +

Dining Discoveries

Daikon no Hana
Friday, August 21
6-10 p.m.

\$39 per Adult, \$23 per child (6-11), \$18 per child (3-5), \$5 per child (0-2)

Join us as we venture into the local community to try out some of the wonderful flavors of Okinawa. This month, we visit Daikon no Hana, in Okinawa City, with its delicious organic Japanese cuisine. Enjoy over 80 different mouthwatering dishes from a beautifully arranged buffet. Bring yen for optional drinks.

For more information, call Tours+ at 646-3502.



Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony

**Thursday, August 20, 2009,
10:00 ~ 16:00**

Tours Plus, 646-3502 Price: Ad \$30 , \$21 (3-11), \$5 (0-2)

Come and experience first-hand a traditional Japanese tea ceremony at a beautiful private okinawan home. After tea, we will go to Kokusai Street for lunch and an afternoon of shopping.

Bring yen for lunch and other purchases.



KERAMA ISLAND SNORKELING

Saturday, August 29 8a.m. - 5p.m.
Ad \$78/ Ch(4-11) \$45

Grab your fins and get ready for some fun! Tour includes transportation to port, boat ride to two snorkeling spot, and tour guide. Please bring your own lunch, hydration, snorkeling set, and wetsuit (if you desired). Snorkel gear will be available for rent

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502

CASTLES, HOMES AND GARDENS

Sunday, August 23 9am to 5pm

Price: Adults \$31.00, Child(3-11) \$21, Child(0-2) \$5.00

Enjoy a wonderful mixture of Okinawa's beauty and culture. Stroll through Southeast Botanical Gardens (included in tour price) followed by lunch at Mihama Shopping Mall. Later enjoy your afternoon at the Futenma Shrine, the Nakagusuku Castle Site where there is a breathtaking view of the surrounding area, then finish your day sipping afternoon tea at the Nakamura House. Bring yen for lunch and purchases.

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502



Zamami Island Day Tour

Sunday, August 30, 9:30 am - 3 pm

Price: Ad \$53, Ch (7-12) \$37,
Ch (3-6) \$19, Inf (0-2) (no meal) \$5

Enjoy the beautiful island of Zamami with its clear water and tranquil beaches. Zamami is a southern island located in the Kerama's. We will travel on a relaxing 1 hour ferry ride then take a short tour before enjoying the remainder of the day at the beach. Make sure to pack a picnic lunch, sunscreen, your swimsuit and a towel. Please bring one bag per person and yen for purchases.

Call Kadena ITT at 098-959-4322

Sub-ship, Lunch, and Beach at the Manza Resort

Sunday, August 30 09:00 ~ 17:00

Ad \$54, Ch \$29(6-12), \$21 (3-5), \$5 (0-2)

Relax and enjoy the day at the beautiful Manza Beach Resort. View the spectacular Okinawa sea life from the comfort of a Subship. Enjoy a delicious BBQ style lunch followed by dessert and coffee or tea while lounging on the beach-side terrace. After lunch, take a dip in the ocean and relax on the resort's beautiful beach. Bring a bathing suit and yen for spending money.

Call MCCS Tours + 646-3502



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit Specials

Now extending to the
Southern Camps!

Band of Spouses Roundtable

Empowering our Families to Become Spartan Strong!
Facilitated by seasoned spouses who have
experienced the stress of military life!



Third Wednesday of every month
Time: 1830-1930
MCAS Futenma Chapel Fisherman's Cove
ALL spouses are welcome
Point of Contact: Samantha Cook
Phone: 636-2115
Samantha.r.cook@usmc.mil



First Wednesday morning of every month Spouses Roundtable is
also held at the Camp Courtney Division Family Readiness Center
from 0900-1000. For more information contact Denise Loftesnes at
622-9135 denise.loftesnes@usmc.mil

Are you ready?

L.I.N.K.S.

for Spouses



August 6

9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Camp Foster, Building 5677

At L.I.N.K.S. learn from experienced
spouses about island fun, available services,
enduring deployments, moving tips,
the Marine Corps, and more.

FREE childcare!
with early registration!

Call 645-3689 today to register for the next class.



www.mccsokinawa.com

The F.O.C.U.S Project...

...provides resiliency training for military families facing the challenges of a family member's deployment during wartime.

Multiple deployments affect both the service member and the family as routines and
roles are disrupted. Children may experience stress related to a parent's role in the
Global War on Terror and the impact of Combat Operational Stress on family life.

FOCUS uses family training techniques to highlight areas
of strength and resilience in the family and promote family
growth to help address current challenges.

FOCUS provides structured activities to bridge gaps in
shared family understanding that may follow stressful
experiences and separations.

In both group and individual family service settings, family
members are taught skills to improve emotional regulation,
problem solving, goal setting and communication.



The FOCUS Project

The growing awareness of the significant
challenges of wartime deployments on military
child and family well-being has prompted a
new initiative funded by the Bureau of Medicine
and Surgery of the Department of the Navy.
Addressing concerns related to parental combat
trauma, stress, injuries and combat-related
physical injuries, state-of-the-art family
resiliency services will be provided to military
children and families. FOCUS was developed
by the UCLA Center for Community Health
and the National
Center for Child
Traumatic Stress.

Project Goals

ASSIST family members to address deployment stress and reminders to
minimize their interference with parenting and family life.

PROVIDE community level consultation and group skill building designed to
support family resiliency.

ENHANCE family communication and support by developing a shared family
narrative about the deployment experiences.

How To Contact Us

FOCUS Headquarters
UCLA Semel Institute
Los Angeles, CA 90024
Info@focusproject.org

P
F

Please contact the FOCUS team for more
information via phone or email. We look
forward to talking with you.



United States Marine Corps

F.O.C.U.S

www.focusproject.org

2009 MCCS HOT DOG EATING CONTEST

FUTENMA FLIGHTLINE FESTIVAL
STAGE

August 23, 5:30-6:10 p.m.

GRAND PRIZE

Roundtrip tickets for two to any
United Airlines USA gateway city
via Nagoya, Osaka, or Tokyo.

CO-SPONSORED BY:
Nathan's and UNITED



READY, SET, EAT!

Watch local contestants eat
their way to victory.

The contestant eating the most hot dogs in 10
minutes wins the grand prize. Listen to Wave 89.1,
or sign up by noon on August 21 at your nearest
participating MCCS club or restaurant to enter a
lottery drawing for your chance to compete.

A maximum of 14 contestants will be
allowed to compete. Five alternatives
will also be chosen.

This event is open to all SOFA status individuals island-wide. Must be 18 years or older.
For more information, call MCCS Marketing at 645-3193. For complete rules and details, visit www.mccsokinawa.com.



MCCS PRESENTS

OKINAPATM

Wine Festival

OKINAWA'S ORIGINAL SINCE 1997



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 5-11 P.M.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1-7 P.M.

BUTLER OFFICERS' CLUB

Ticket sales begin August 1.

Typhoon dates:
TBD

MCCS and the Butler Officers' Club cordially invite you to a wine tasting and educational gala. Try wines from around the world, enjoy gourmet treats from top chefs, and shop for a selection of both fine and affordably priced wines.

Register for a chance to win two roundtrip tickets to select U.S. cities.

Tickets are \$35 and available at the Butler Officers' Club, The Palms, Globe & Anchor, Kinser Surfside, and the Courtney SNCO Club.

Ticket includes a commemorative Okinapa wine glass.

Sponsored in part by:



Must be 20 years or older to purchase tickets and for admission.

Only adults will be admitted.

Tickets valid only on specified day.

MCCS
MARINE CORPS Community Services
Makes OKINAWA Home!
www.mccsokinawa.com



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

Extras

Welcome Aboard

CAPT BARTOK and his wife MANDY

MARINE JARGON

Bug juice – Government issued insecticide

As you were – Resume what you were doing.

Carry on – continue as before

Chow – Food

Deck - Floor

Field Day - Barracks clean up

IMPORTANT PHONE DIRECTORY

Officer of the Day	623-9110
Family Readiness Officer	623-4990
Personal Service Center (Courtney)	622-7332
Child Youth Teen Program (CYTP/CDC)	645-4117
Overseas WIC Program	645-9302

AUGUST PROMOTIONS

GYSGT THOMAS N. SMITH

SSGT ERIC X. RODRIGUEZ

CPL DOMINIC R. LARDI

CONGRATULATIONS !

ON BASE PREFIX

622 (954)
623 (969)
645 (970)
646 (971)
634 (961)
632 (962)
633 (959)

To dial on base from a off base number is easy. No need to call the operator, just replace the prefix with the corresponding off-base access number. For example.
623-4990 would be 969-4990.

New Arrivals

Cpl Cazares and his wife Dee Dee
Son Strydir 4lbs 8oz., 17 in., born on 13 July
2009



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

Classes

Kimono (Yukata) Dressing - Summer Casual Kimono
21 AUGUST, FRIDAY, 1130-1300, FOSTER PSC

Credit Report and Credit Score Analysis

This workshop will assist you in discovering how your credit reports and scores are affected by everything from applying for loans to closing accounts.

We will also discuss how to cope with a credit crisis and bounce back from a bad credit rating and bankruptcy. We will also help you establish an action plan for building or rebuilding your credit, along with fixing and maintaining your credit rating. Call the PSC nearest to you to register.

04 AUGUST, TUESDAY, 1130-1300, FOSTER PSC

05 AUGUST, WEDNESDAY, 0830-1000, KINSER PSC

19 AUGUST, WEDNESDAY, 0830-1000, HANSEN PSC

IMPORTANT PHONE DIRECTORY

Foster PSC	645-2104
Kinser PSC	637-2815
Hansen PSC	623-4522/4860
Schwab PSC	625-2622/2646

LIBRARIES

Foster	645-7178	Hansen	623-7372
Courtney	622-9280	Kinser	637-1039
Futenma	636-3946	Schwab	625-2518

Loan Locker

Are you new to the island or preparing to PCS and wondering how to get by without having your household goods on hand? Our Relocation Assistance Center Loan Locker is here to provide basic home items such as pots, pans, dishes, flatware and tumblers to incoming and out-bound command sponsored personnel until they have access to their household goods shipment. Car seats, strollers and high chairs are also available. Items are checked out for a 30 day period and may be extended an additional 30 days, if necessary. A copy of service member's orders are required to receive items. The incoming service member's sponsor on Okinawa may obtain these items in advance with a copy of the PCS orders. Call your nearest PSC for more information.

Spouses' Learning Series (SLS)

Please come join us for our Spouses' seminars on various topics which are provided to empower spouses and assist them in developing leadership skills.

TURKISH COOKING, 26 AUG,
1030-1330, FOSTER CHAPEL

Coupon Program

On a weekly basis, MCCS receives literally thousands of coupons through the mail from independent organizations stateside who care about the military community and support their popular Coupon Program. Stop by any PSC to pickup a package, the coupons can be used up to 6 months after the expiration date!

Support Group for Spouses of deployed Service Members

Educational support group for spouses of deployed service members which helps spouses develop new friendships, relieve stress, learn to cope with deployment and enjoy Okinawa.

Wednesdays, 1000-1200

Call 645-2915 to register



31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

On-Line Resources

www.marines.mil/units/marforpac/iiimef/31stmeu/Pages/default.aspx

This is the official 31st MEU website! Save this link to your "Favorites" on your computer. The website is updated frequently to keep you informed on what your Marine or Sailor is doing at work.

www.mccsokinawa.com

This site offers a ton of information about what is being offered on all Marine Corps bases on the island. The site has links and information for over 80 MCCS programs offered on Okinawa.

www.kadenaservices.com

Provides information about activities and services the Air Force offers to all military members and their families here on Okinawa. It also contains links to Army MWR events on Torii Station and Okuma's online reservation page. Click on PETS to get links to the Vet Clinics and Karing Kennels.

www.japanupdate.com

Provides updates on what's going on Okinawa.

www.okinawahai.com

This website is designed by military spouses for military spouses on Okinawa.

www.mcbbutler.usmc.mil

Provides valuable information on policies and procedures that apply directly to all residents stationed on Marine Corps bases Japan.

www.okinawa.pac.dodea.edu

This site can answer any question you might have pertaining to the on-base school system on Okinawa

www.aafes.com/ems/pac/okinawa.htm

This site is your resource for all AAFES movie theater schedules

www.okinawayardsales.com

Great site to buy used items and sell your unwanted items.

www.uso.org/usoonpatrol/index.html

USO on-line magazine